

Rhode Island State Planning Council
AMENDED Draft Minutes of Thursday, December 12, 2013 Meeting
William E. Powers Building
Conference Room A
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

I. ATTENDANCE

1. Members Present

Mr. Richard Licht, Chair	Director, RI Department of Administration
Ms. Kelly Mahoney, Vice Chair	Policy Director, Office of the Governor
Mr. Kevin Flynn, Secretary	Associate Director, Division of Planning
Ms. Lisa Bourbonnais	Representing Mr. Sam Shamoon, Governor's Designee
Ms. Jeanne Boyle	President's Designee, RILOCAT
Ms. Janet Coit	Director, RIDEM
Ms. Sharon Conard-Wells	West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation
Dr. Michael Fine	RI Department of Health
Mr. Richard Godfrey	Executive Director, Rhode Island Housing
Ms. Marion Gold	Executive Director, RI Office of Energy Resources
Mr. Thomas Mullaney	RI Department of Administration, Budget Office
Mr. L. Vincent Murray	RI LOCAT, Government Official Representative
Ms. Anna Prager	Public Member
Mr. Peder Schaefer	Representing Mr. Dan Beardsley, RILOCT, Executive Director
Mr. Robert Shawver	Representing Mr. Michael Lewis, Director, RIDOT
Mr. Mark Therrien	Representing Mr. Raymond Studley, RIPTA
Mr. John Trevor	Environmental Advocate
Mr. Michael Walker	Representing Mr. Marcel Valois, RI Economic Development Corporation
Ms. Janet White-Raymond	Public Member

2. Members Absent

Mr. Stephen Cardi	Cardi Corporation
Ms. Jeanne Cola	Chair, RI Housing Resources Commission
Mr. Roy Coulombe	Public Member
Mr. Ruben Flores-Marzan	Providence Department of Planning & Development
Mr. Scott Wolf	Environmental Advocate

3. Guests

Mr. Michael Hogan	RI House Policy Office
Ms. Sue Kiernan	RI Department of Environmental Management
Mr. Ernie Panciera	RI Department of Environmental Management
Dr. Robert Vanderslice	RI Department of Health

4. Staff – Division of Planning

Ms. Melanie Army	Supervising Planner, Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Paul Gonsalves	Senior Planner, Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Nancy Hess	Supervising Planner, Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Siobhan O’Kane	Principal Planner, Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Jared Rhodes	Chief, Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Dawn Vittorioso	Executive Assistant, Division of Planning

II. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order

Chairman Licht called the meeting to order on December 12, 2013 at 9:06 a.m.

2. Approval of the November 7, 2013 Meeting Minutes – *for vote*

Mr. Licht asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of November 7, 2013. Mr. Trevor moved to approve the minutes of November 7, 2013 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Godfrey. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items

There were none.

4. RI State Guide Plan Update: Water Quality Management Plan – *for discussion*

Mr. Licht introduced Ms. Sue Kiernan who delivered an informational PowerPoint presentation (attachment 1). Having concluded the formal presentation, the Council engaged in the following discussion:

Mr. Licht asked Ms. Kiernan if she could share successes. Ms. Coit emphasized in the coordination that is happening between the state and municipalities to update the Plan. Ms. Coit also acknowledged the coordination and pointed out that having everyone participate at the meetings is helping to resolve local concerns.

Mr. Licht asked if the RI Coastal Resources Management Council (RICRMC) is involved in the process. Ms. Kiernan said that they are very involved and they are part of the Steering Committee. Mr. Licht asked the extent of RIDEM’s involvement with Massachusetts & Connecticut. Ms. Kiernan referenced the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP) and noted that the program recently went through a reform process. She

indicated that local and state agencies from Massachusetts are involved in the forums to discuss and manage the bi-state watershed issues. Ms. Kiernan said that there is coordination between RIDEM and Connecticut agencies; however, there is not a formalized mechanism that is institutionalized. Ms. Coit added that the recent reform of the NBEP was to engage the State of Massachusetts. She noted that she and a Massachusetts counterpart have since had a close-working relationship, which is imperative to improve treatment and to protect RI's water quality. Mr. Licht asked if the Plan will discuss historical improvements in water quality over time. In response, Ms. Kiernan said that it will be difficult to include some statistical data due to the standards changing over time; however, to the extent where historical data is available, she will include it in the Plan. Mr. Licht questioned how the final plan will address the actual implementation for the twenty-six watershed plans. Ms. Kiernan indicated that efforts will be focused on trying to find better means for focusing and aligning federal resources; particularly for the priority needed areas. Mr. Licht explained the process for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and indicated that the TIP model would be worth reviewing to obtain and secure federal funding.

Ms. Coit stated that individual actions make it difficult to go through the process due to the number of people that are involved to defuse individual actions. She then referred to the cesspool phase out as an example and specified the deadline of January 1, 2014 to have all cesspools replaced with a septic systems and pointed out that there are hundreds of people that have not complied with the regulations.

Ms. Boyle responded to Mr. Licht's earlier request addressed to Ms. Kiernan asking her to share successes. She indicated that water quality for East Providence beaches has improved and deemed acceptable for swimming over the last couple of years. She then stressed the need to focus on investments/programs to the areas where most people can benefit from improvements in water quality. Ms. Boyle noted that interstate coordination is difficult; however, it is essential for the Plan's success.

Dr. Fine referenced the benefits of increasing local food consumption from one percent to twenty percent and asked what the impacts on both water supply and water quality would be should that occur. Ms. Kiernan said that historically, there have not been substantial impacts and stated that there are established ways of controlling agricultural water usage, water quality and run off.

Ms. Conard-Wells indicated that she has been working with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to address urban agricultural issues and suggested contacting with them to address issues and gain their support. Ms. Coit indicated that RIDEM's Chief of Agriculture, Mr. Ken Ayars, is working to address urban agricultural issues and stated that she would like the opportunity to coordinate the efforts with Ms. Conard-Wells. Ms. Conard-Wells agreed and then referenced Mashpaug Pond in Providence and expressed her concern for the lack of public education with water quality issues such as how personal actions impact quality and what people should or should not be doing in specific water bodies. Dr. Fine said that he worked with diverse communities and found that most communities are drinking bottled water because they believe that tap water is not safe to drink; therefore, he agreed that public education is essential.

Mr. Murray referenced the earlier discussion to include historical data into the Plan and added that economic development impacts as a result of having good water quality should also be included.

Mr. Trevor asked if there is a way to decrease water chlorination. Ms. Kiernan stated that there are other alternative options for disinfecting the water; however, chlorination is the more common practice for disinfection.

Mr. Schaefer referenced the \$32 million clean water financing slide and asked what will happen to entitlements under sequestration. Ms. Coit pointed out an article in the Providence Journal that indicates that the budget agreement may reinstate some of the sequester funds.

Ms. Bourbonnais referenced the earlier discussion relating to good agricultural practices and stated that good practices also exist for animal agriculture.

There being no further questions or comments, Mr. Licht thanked Ms. Kiernan for her presentation and moved to the next item on the agenda.

5. Health in all Policies Guide for State and Local Governments – for discussion

Mr. Licht introduced Dr. Robert Vanderslice to discuss the Health in all Policies Guide for State and Local Governments. Prior to doing so, Dr. Fine took a moment acknowledge Dr. Vanderslice's dedication to environmental health. Dr. Vanderslice then delivered two informational PowerPoint presentations (attachments 2 & 3). Having concluded the formal presentations, the Council engaged in the following discussion:

Dr. Fine noted that the underlying tension that is often unspoken is the definition of health; however, once you have a workable definition that will allow the opportunity to understand which health impacts will need focus and it will assist with the planning process.

Ms. Gold asked how this work will integrate with the green healthy homes initiative that is being led by Mr. Mark Kravatz. Dr. Vanderslice said that he has seen the green healthy homes initiative and it is essentially a manifestation of applying health in all policies.

Ms. Conard-Wells stated that the West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation is currently incorporating the healthy homes content into the home buyer's education program. She stressed the importance of educating the public and questioned how the state can institutionalize these benefits into other RI business practices. Mr. Godfrey clarified that, in Rhode Island, operating savings from alternative energy sources and enhanced energy efficiency generally do not offset the additional capital costs without external subsidies. Rhode Island Housing (RIH) has funded many different initiatives in seeking cost-effective, environmentally healthier housing but all strategies come at additional costs that are not affordable to low and moderate income households. Therefore, it is necessary to find external funding sources for these efforts to be financially feasible.

Mr. Licht said the challenge is to change individual behavior and therefore, these types of improvements are necessary to communicate when beginning the process.

There being no questions or comments, Mr. Licht thanked Dr. Vanderslice for his presentation and moved to the next item on the agenda.

6. Rhode Map RI Project Update – for discussion

Next, Mr. Licht introduced Ms. Melanie Army who delivered an informational PowerPoint presentation

(attachment 4). Having concluded the formal presentation, the Council engaged in the following discussion:

Ms. White-Raymond referred to the labor force issue and said that companies have positions available; however, they cannot find qualified candidates or they are seeking candidates with three to five years' experience, which is something that should be factored in. Ms. Army indicated that this issue was mentioned at a prior meeting that she conducted and stated that companies need to be willing to take on entry level positions. Ms. White-Raymond also said that she believes that there is a skills gap. Ms. Army said that Rhode Map RI's consultant has been reviewing the workforce and education system with the RI Department of Labor and Training and the Governor's Workforce Board.

Mr. Licht took a moment to explain that several council members would need to leave early and therefore he asked Ms. Army to pause so that he could introduce the next two items on the agenda for action.

7. 2014 Committee Appointments – *for vote*

Mr. Rhodes referred to the agenda supplement and explained that one additional person has been added to the listing since this mailing. He indicated that Mr. Andrew Wade will represent the RI League of Cities and Towns as part of the Recreation Resource Review Committee.

There being no questions or comments, Mr. Licht asked for a motion to approve the 2014 Committee appointments. Mr. Godfrey moved to approve and was seconded by Ms. White-Raymond. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

8. Proposed 2014 Meeting Schedule– *for vote*

Mr. Licht asked if anyone had any questions or comments. There being none, he asked for a motion to approve the 2014 meeting schedule as presented. Ms. White-Raymond motioned to approve the 2014 meeting schedule, and Ms. Boyle seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

CONTINUED - Rhode Map RI Project Update

At this point, Mr. Licht redirected the Council back to Ms. Army asking if anyone had any additional questions.

Mr. Godfrey indicated that RIEDC has policies in place to exclude resources from going into neighborhood businesses.

Ms. Coit asked if Rhode Map RI initiatives will interact with RIEDC's statutory requirement to develop an Economic Development Strategy Plan for the state. In response, Mr. Flynn indicated that Statewide Planning and RIEDC will present this plan to Legislator, which will be no later than October, 2014. Ms. Army noted that RIEDC will become the RI Commerce Corporation on January 1, 2014.

Mr. Licht took a moment to recognize Ms. Army for all the work that has been done thus far and stated that the public outreach initiative to ensure that the public is heard has been "phenomenal". Ms. Army thanked Mr. Licht and took a moment to thank the Consortium members that were present for all their hard work.

As there were no further questions or comments, Mr. Licht asked Mr. Flynn to deliver the Associate Director's Report.

9. Associate Director's Report – *for discussion*

Mr. Flynn addressed the following items under the Associate Director's report:

- Ms. Army's pregnancy announcement;
- Staffing update – introduced Ms. Siobhan O'Kane, Principal Planner for Rhode Map RI. Mr. Flynn noted that Mr. Witt has been transitioned to the Transportation unit within Statewide Planning.
- OWTS & Wetlands Taskforce;
- Subdivision & Zoning Task Force;
- Housing Oversight Commission;
- Draft Development Review Board Enabling legislation;
- CDBG Disaster Recovery Workshops;
- Pending Warwick Train Station announcement;

10. Other Business – *for discussion*

There was none.

11. Adjourn

Mr. Licht took a moment to wish everyone a wonderful, healthy and safe holiday season. He then asked for a motion to adjourn. Council member Mullaney motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Council member Trevor and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kevin Flynn
Secretary